

Navajo Nation and Arizona Transportation Partnership Steering Committee Meeting Notes



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2018

9:30 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

ADOT Northcentral District Training Room

Flagstaff, AZ

Facilitator:

Laura Webb, ADOT Office of Partnering

Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Dixon	Contrella	ADOT
Johnson	Lynn	ADOT
Merrick	Audra	ADOT
Yazzie	Kee	ADOT
Gene	Ermalinda	ADOT
Opie	Bonnie	ADOT
Kirby	Mackenzie	ADOT
Tso	Kendra	Apache County
Larsen	Herby	BIA
Torres Gonzalez	Jaime	FHWA
Heier	Ammon	FHWA
Mohamed	Lara	FHWA
Lomayaktewa	Michael	Hopi DOT
James	Jason	NACOG
Thompson	Jesse	Navajo County
Begay	Miles	Navajo County
Bess	Bill	Navajo County
Benally	Karen	Navajo DOT

Welcome

Laura opened the meeting with a review of the four partnering principles: Communication, Commitment, Cooperation and Continuous Improvement. She explained that the primary purpose of the all-day session was to develop an agenda for the annual meeting on April 27, 2018.

Updates: Issue Resolution Chart and Action Plan

Most of the action items have been completed with the exception of a few tasks that will continue to be addressed. The partnership has made significant progress in accomplishing the crash data goal. Remaining tasks include finalizing data/forms and coordination between the tribe, ADOT and various police departments. The Issue Resolution Chart was also updated.

Identification of Issues to be addressed during the next 12 months

The group participated in an interactive activity to identify and agree on the top three issues to be presented at the upcoming annual meeting. All attendees at the annual meeting will have an opportunity to comment on the issues and prioritize their importance. They will consider the three important issues as they develop goals and tasks to work on over the next 12 months.

Issue #1

Gravel Roads – Resources and Construction

1. Describe the issue

- Earth roads become impassible
- Lack of resources (gravel & water)
- Transportation – travel distances & cost
- Student school attendance decreases (kids miss school when they can't get there)
- School loses funds when kids are absent

2. Who are the Partners involved?

- Counties (5)
- Public Schools, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), Charter Schools
- Departments of Transportation (DOT) (2)
- Utah and New Mexico DOTs

3. What are the challenges in resolving the issue?

- Obtaining sufficient funds (are there grant opportunities available?)
- Limited resources (gravel pits)
- Cooperation challenges among all the affected entities
- Road clearances
- Flooding and drainage problems
- Maintaining sufficient manpower and equipment

4. What is the value of resolving the issue?

- Increased safety for residences, including children
- Life style improvement
- Increase in school funding
- Economic growth
- More available time
- Less vehicle maintenance

5. Who will present?

- NDOT-Garrett Silversmith, Navajo DOT

Points of Contact:

Bill Bess, Navajo County, Darryl Bradley, Navajo County, and Marlinda Littleman, Navajo DOT

Issue #2

Education and Training to Increase Participation with Other Agencies

1. Describe the issue

- Misinformation about programs and processes
- FHWA has different processes and rules.
- Agencies are not sufficiently educated about funding opportunities and processes. Some need to learn basic funding fundamentals.
- Lack of communication and coordination of planning priorities for Navajo construction projects.
- Communities along Route H60 need to communicate with legislators and leadership to assure everyone hears the same messages.
- Insufficient advocacy for projects at State Transportation Board meetings. There are not many state route projects through tribal land that are proposed or discussed at those meetings.
- Limited tribal participation with COGs
- Need educational, scholarship and internship opportunities to entice tribal graduate students to return to the Navajo Nation.

2. Who are the Partners involved?

- ADOT Counties/Towns/Cities
- Tribes COGs/MPOs
- FHWA BIA (Realty)
- Federal Lands NDOT
- TTAP

3. What are the challenges in resolving the issue?

- Overload of information (e.g., presentations about how processes are carried out for each entity such as TIP, STIP, NAGOG role)
- Lack of commitment and key people not attending meetings
- Lack of cooperation between agencies

4. What is the value of resolving the issue?

- Streamline programs and processes
- More informed decision making
- Strategic investment
- Greater degree of success in getting projects funded

5. Who will present?

- Jason James, NACOG
- Karen Benally, NDOT

Issue #3

Crash Data

1. Describe the issue

- Historic background - reason why crash data is so important
- What needs to be done? What has been done?
- Safety improvements cannot be completed without additional funding. Implementation of the crash data project will be a big step in securing new funds.

2. Who are the Partners involved?

- Navajo Tribe – Norma Bowman
- ADOT HSIP – Mona Aglan-Swick
- ADOT safety data: Tim Jordan

3. What are the challenges in resolving the issue?

- There is an IGA in process that needs to be finalized. Decisions need to be made regarding who owns the data and data usage permissions.
- IT requirements include new forms, data security and training/support. The expected roll-out date for the project to be completed is June 30, 2018.

4. What is the value of resolving the issue?

- Funding opportunities that could potentially result in safety improvements
- HSIP, Planning to Programming (P2P)

5. Who will present?

- Norma Bowman, Navajo Tribe
- Mona Aglan-Swick and Tim Jordan, ADOT
- Jeff King, FHWA

Although, the following items will not be discussed at the annual meeting, the tribe and ADOT districts will continue working together to address them:

1. Safety

- Improve school bus stops and turning lanes
- Complete Road Safety Assessments (RSAs)

2. Right-of-way (ROW) Issues

- Address ROW encroachment of vendors during parades
- ROW for future projects – make it easier to acquire ROW or permits for future construction and maintenance projects
- Need back fencing to keep animals off the ADOT ROW

3. Enforcement of weight limits for trucks to minimize damage to roads

4. Emergency Management Coordination

5. Overtopping assessments are needed to address flooding issues

Other agenda items agreed on for the annual meeting

The group reviewed the brainstorm ideas (identified at the October 25, 2017 steering committee meeting) to determine which would be most valuable to include in the annual meeting agenda:

Success Stories (10 minutes per story)

- ADOT sharing millings with County – Lynn Johnson and Bill Bess
- School bus turn around/turnouts – ADOT/NDOT/BIA/Navajo County – Jesse Thompson
- Road graveling project for five years – Bill Bess
- Sign panel replacement #2,000) in Hopi/Navajo – Jason James
- Apache County/NDOT limestone driveway in Lechee, AZ, north of Kayenta – Kendra Tso and Karen Benally

ADOT Categorical Exclusion (CE) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) responsibilities (10 minutes)

Paul O'Brien, ADOT Environmental Planning Administrator

Highlights of Long Range Transportation Plans (10 minutes each) – Karen Benally, Navajo DOT and Greg Byers, ADOT

Successful Agreements – What agreements are partner groups using that can be utilized on future templates to streamline projects? Arlando Teller or Garret Silversmith

Closing

- Updated invitation list for annual meeting
- Meeting Evaluation

Summary of Participant Workshop Evaluation

Scores are based on 14 evaluations. Comments are taken from the evaluation forms exactly as written.

1. How valuable was this meeting for you? (1=Lowest/ 5=Highest) 4.50
2. Could you or other team members have done anything more during the meeting to encourage a successful outcome? Yes 2 No 11
3. How well did the facilitator guide and encourage the team to understand and discuss key meeting agenda items? (1=Lowest/ 5=Highest) 4.57
4. How effective was the speaker(s)? (1=Lowest/ 5=Highest) 4.46
5. How do you rate the effectiveness of the team? (1=Lowest/5=Highest) 4.50
6. Do you have any suggestions for improving future meetings? Yes 4 No 9
7. How satisfied were you with the facility? (1=Lowest/ 5=Highest) 4.43
8. How satisfied were you with the refreshments? (1=Lowest/ 5= Highest) 3.77 N/A

Comments:

- I think we had a good cross section of agencies represented today-All were engaged and provided good input-when I saw the list of invitees I was a little nervous too many, but the group was a good size for making the discussions that were made.
- There needs to be effort from Navajo in terms of attendance. For example: Big agenda item is safety therefore the safety representative should be here. I do like the idea of present at the annual meeting with clearly defined goals and objectives; and use the annual meeting as a vehicle to achieve those already determined goals and objectives
- Thank you Laura, for guiding the group through the agenda
- We need to get things done, somehow we all need to be on the same page, say good-bye to McKenzie
- Thank you, very productive session☺
- Great meeting-thank you!
- Bring back task teams, less meetings per year
- Suggest reducing meeting time form 6 hrs. To 4 hrs.
- This was good to know what we will be focus on the year
- Enjoyed session of participating
- None
- Great job!
- Keep moving ahead